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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Friday, September 13, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CAMPFIRE DISHES FOR FALL." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Just yesterday, when I was thinking to myself that summer was over and very soon now I'd better be taking the woolens out from the moth balls and giving the furnace a going-over to get it ready for cold days, along came a letter asking for more picnic information. Wrote this picnic-minded listener: "Please give us a chat soon on some nice easy campfire dishes. In my opinion, September and October are the two best picnic months of the year. That's the time you can enjoy a campfire to the full and hot dishes cooked over it."

This letter drove all thoughts of winter clothes and furnace-cleaning right out of my mind. I sat right down to think of the very best food I had ever eaten over a campfire. And today, for the sake of all listeners who agree that fall is the best time for picnics, I'll announce my topic as hot ideas for cold-weather picnickers. And I'll only mention food that adapts itself to cooking in a kettle or a frying pan over an open fire.

Let's begin, though, by reviewing the good woodsman's rules for an efficient cooking fire. If you're used to outdoor cooking, you know these rules only too well. But if you happen to be getting a campfire meal for the first time, they'll be helpful. Rule No. 1: Have your fire small enough to handle easily. Rule No. 2: Use only dry, seasoned wood. Rule No. 3: Build the fire half an hour or so before you want it and let it burn to coals, replenishing it now and then so you'll have a good deep bed of glowing embers. A large flaming fire burns your hands, smokes your face, and blackens your food. Rule No. 4: If you have a large picnic party with everyone his own cook, build several small fires instead of trying to get the whole crowd around a larger one.

So much for the fire. Now about the food. Picnic appetities are born big. So have plenty of substantial food, but don't try to have too many kinds of food. Nothing worse than a fussy picnic. If you plan one hot, hearty combination dish -- an all-in-one affair of meat, vegetables and so on -- and then have some crisp relishes, buttered rolls, fruit, cookies and a good hot drink, that's an outdoor menu that should satisfy everyone.

As for the hot dish you plan to cook, be sure it's a "short cooker" and an easy one. Broiled and fried foods are popular for campfire use because they cook in such a short time. The same is true of foods you cook in a kettle. Another point. Strongly flavored foods suit picnic appetites very well -- for example, bacon, onion, cheese. And your hot dish can afford to be hot in more ways than one. You can use plenty of hot seasoning, as in concoctions like chile con carne, or curry, or barbecued steak with hot Texas sauce.

Well, the fire's built and burned down to glowing embers. Now what to cook on it? Main-dish suggestions first. Ever try Ring Tum Tiddy? Make it like this: Cut up about a quarter of a pound of bacon in small pieces. Start it cooking in your frying pan. Add about 3 sliced onions. Cook until they're brown. Then add 1 can of tomatoes and 1 can of corn. When these are boiling, add sharp sliced cheese and cook just until the cheese melts. Serve the hot mixture on toasted rolls or crackers. That's Ring Tum Tiddy, **picnickers** -- a quick-and-easy, hot-and-hearty campfire dish.

If you like hamburgers and would enjoy a variation of the usual plain hamburg, try a Cowboy Stew. Mold chopped beef or hamburg in small flat cakes. Put some fat in the hot frying pan. Slice an onion into that fat and fry until it turns yellow. Then add the hamburg cakes. Brown on both sides and when done, pour over them a can of vegetable soup. As soon as the thick soup is hot, remove from the fire and serve.

Chowder is a favorite campfire dish in New England -- fish chowder. If you don't care for fish, you can use the same recipe with canned corn instead of fish. That will make you a good hot <u>corn</u> chowder. Dice some salt pork and cook onion slices in it. Add 2 cups of water, 1 and one-half cups of raw potato diced, and salt and pepper. Cook for three or four minutes. Then add a pound of fresh fish, boned, or 1 can of corn. Cook until the potatoes are soft. The last thing add 2 cups of milk and one-half cup of cracker crumbs. Serve steaming.

If you like a hot and hearty sandwich for the main item on the menu, try a Western Sandwich. Start this as you have the other dishes I've mentioned so far -- with onion browned in fat in a frying pan. Use about 1 onion, chopped, to 2 tablespoons of butter or bacon fat. Then add one-half cup of chopped ham and 4 eggs. Keep the mixture stirring until the eggs are firm. Then spread between buttered slices of toast or bread.

So far, I've only mentioned <u>canned</u> tomatoes and corn. <u>Fresh</u> tomatoes and corn are also ideal campfire food. Drop green corn in a kettle of boiling salted water. It will only take from five to ten minutes to cook. Tomatoes are good eaten out of hand on a picnic, with just a bit of salt for seasoning. They're also good sliced, dipped in egg and crumbs, and fried in your camp frying pan.

Some form of quick camp bread also goes well on a picnic like this. Pancakes or flapjacks are favorites. You can carry your pancake batter to the picnic in a screw-top glass jar and bake the cakes in your frying pan. Ever try rolled pancakes? Cook sausages in one pan; pancakes in another. Lay a hot sausage on top of each pancake and roll it up for easy eating. Fried cornmeal mush served with maple sirup is another good campfire cereal dish.

Then, as I said at the start, some of the popular highly seasoned dishes make ideal picnic food. Chili con carne is one -- very easy to get together in a picnic-kettle. Lamb curry with plenty of spice is another. Finally, don't forget barbecued steak with hot sauce.

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